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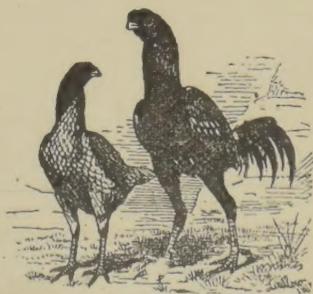
The Indian Game Fowl.

By G. T. WHITFIELD.

FEB 6 1894

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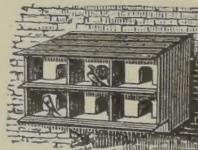
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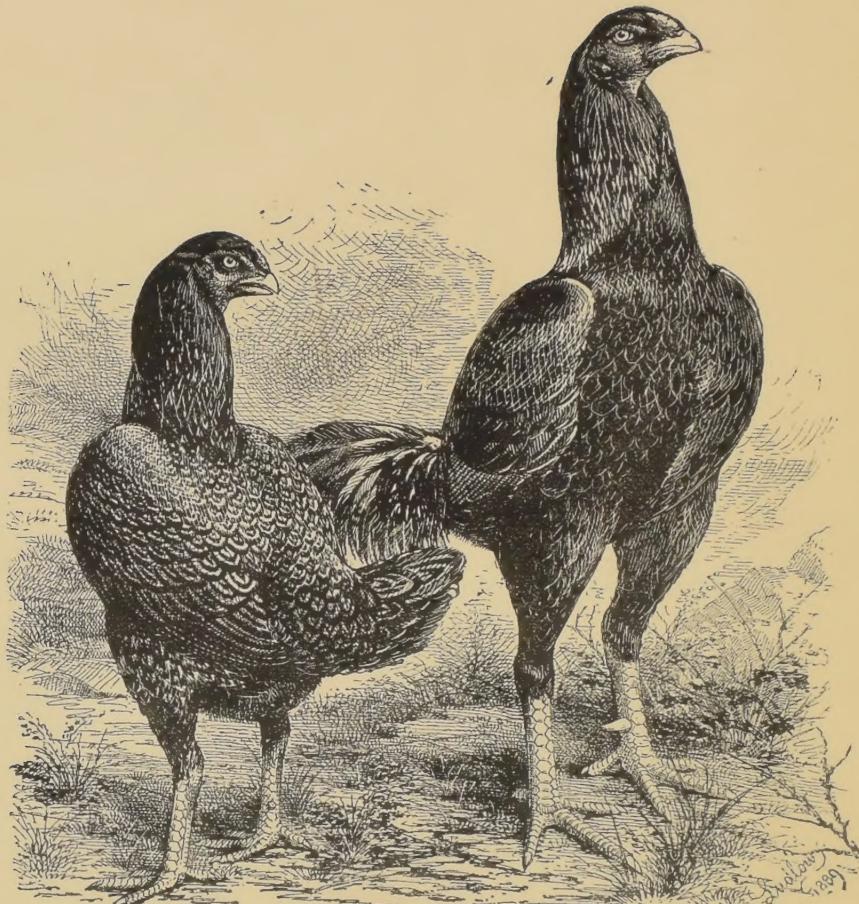


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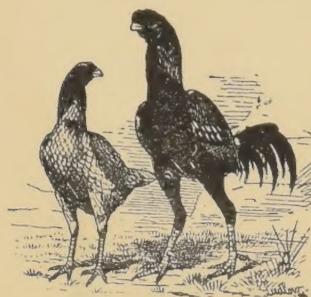


INDIAN GAME.

“AGITATOR” AND “LADY WHITFIELD.”

The Property of Mr. G. T. WHITFIELD, Colebridge, Gloucester (Hon. Sec. of the Indian Game Club). Cock, winner of 2nd Prize, Birmingham; 3rd Prize, Crystal Palace. Hen, winner of 1st Prizes, Crystal Palace, Birmingham, &c., &c.

THE
INDIAN GAME FOWL



George
G. T. WHITFIELD

BY

LONDON
THE FANCIERS' GAZETTE, Lim.
54 to 57, IMPERIAL BUILDINGS, LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

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Museum of Comp. Zoöl.

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PREFACE.

THIS short treatise on one of the most utilitarian breeds is written with the hope that it may be found useful not only to fanciers, but also to those breeders and rearers of poultry for commercial purposes, and that by producing a finer quality of table poultry, a share at least of the ever-increasing sum handed over each year to foreign countries for poultry and game, amounting last year to £500,000, may be retained in this country, fully believing that the great problem how to secure this is not by having large poultry farms, but by the many small holders each keeping a few, adopting thereby the French system.

I tender my sincere thanks to Mr. Ludlow for his admirable plate of Indian Game, and also to those other gentlemen, whose names are inserted, for their valuable information.

GEO. T. WHITFIELD.

Colebridge, Gloucester.

March, 1892.



INDIAN GAME.

CHAPTER I.

AS each week issues its many poultry papers, so each week brings the question, "Which is the best variety of poultry to keep?" and how contradictory are the opinions offered! And why? Because we all of us have our fancies; we all of us have our old friends, whose good points, when they have stood the test of time, we naturally wish to advocate for the benefit of others. Still we must allow every breed has its charm, and however much a fancier may lean to one or two special breeds, if a fancier at all he must see beauty in the others also. One only has to walk down between the rows of pens at a Palace or other first-class show to admire the varied points of beauty in the perfect specimens of the several breeds.

Each variety has its place as a fancy, but all varieties have not a place as regards utility, and as poultry is now making such rapid strides in England, and becoming one of the subjects for lectures connected with technical education, all breeds will have to be judged by this word "utility," and if found wanting will be relegated as purely "fancy," and so remain in the hands of a few.

Poultry is a hobby, and what a grand practical training school for any youth, laying the foundation stone of perseverance and judgment, and exercising to the full his mental powers, and what a magnetic hobby, too! How often one hears that So-and-So has given up poultry, but he comes back again when the opportunity offers to his old joys. I remember a well-known auctioneer, when selling some pedigree stock, thus describe one of the bidders, who was

hesitating between the biddings : “ Ah ! he’s like one of those grand pile game cockerels. He’ll come again ; they always come again,” and he did. So does the true fancier. But it is not to moralise I am writing these few lines, but to advocate the grand qualities of one of the best, if not the best breed, namely, Indian game, or rather, Cornish Indian game.



CHAPTER II.

ORIGIN.

 In recent years the Indian game were in England confined to Cornwall and Devon, revelling in the hills and dales of those two fair counties, which veritably are ideal homes for poultry, and I believe I am not alone in saying it is impossible for one living in the Midlands and north of England to get that sheen and tightness of feather on their birds, in obtaining which the climate there materially assists. One can only conjecture as to the origin of the Indian game—but without doubt the Aseel, the oldest and purest race of domestic fowl used by the native rajahs and princes of Northern India for fighting purposes, which has been carried on there from earliest ages, said to have been introduced into England under the name of Indian game, as being from India—appear to have been the parents of the present Indian Game, possibly crossed with the Malay, and which was then improved by English breeders; and for some years the two breeds seem to have run in conflict under the same title of Indian game, when the original breed, by fresh importations, took the name of Aseel, by which they were known in India.

The following testimony on this subject by Mr. Montressor, copied from "Poultry," is valuable :

" 'Aseel'—this is the name by which the breed is known and styled in India, and has been adopted in England for some years in order to distinguish it from that which is designated 'Indian Game' (a breed not known to the natives of India), and originated in England by the late Sir Walter Raleigh Gilbert upwards of sixty years since, when he imported from India some red 'Aseel' into Cornwall, and there crossed them with the Derby black reds. Sir Walter (then General) Gilbert personally gave me this information in 1846."

The present breed has been known for at least thirty years by the name of Cornish game, and Mr. Lewis Wright in his well-known

book on Poultry speaks of there being a fine and numerous class at the Plymouth Show in 1870, each bird showing an element of Malay blood. They were well known then among the Cornish miners, and used by them in the old fighting days, but were never of much use for spurs, being too heavy to rise. Some fifteen years ago they were improved by the introduction of black Indian game, thus producing larger specimens and male birds with solid black breasts, but of whatever origin they were, it is now a well-established breed, for no variety breeds truer for shape and feather.



CHAPTER III.

CHARACTERISTICS.

HE chief characteristic of the Indian game is its extraordinary table properties, possessing as it does exceptionally broad deep breasts heavily meated throughout, and capital thighs, carrying more flesh, and that in the right place, where it is wanted, than any other fowl. Cocks have been known to weigh up to 13lbs. and over, and hens up to 11lbs., several of them vieing with a turkey in the amount of flesh they produce; and in proof of the excellent quality, the fact that it has again and again taken the premier honours in table classes at the principal Shows speaks for itself.

In 1888, at Birmingham, it took first prize for any other pure breed and special for the best table bird in the Show; and also first prize for crossbreeds as Indian Game Dorking.

In 1889, at Birmingham, it took first prize for any other pure breed; and first for crossbreeds as Indian Game Dorking.

In 1890, at the Royal Plymouth, first was awarded to a pair of Indian Game pullets; and first to a pair of crossbreds, being Indian Game Dorkings. At the Dairy it took first, second, and fourth for cockerels, and first for pullets in crossbreds, as Indian Game Dorking and Plymouth Rock-Indian Game. At Birmingham it took first and second for any other pure breed, second, third and fourth for crossbreeds as Indian Game-Dorking and Indian Game-Plymouth Rock; and one of our best authorities on Poultry, Mr. Tegetmeier, in writing on "Poultry as Profitable Stock," "Breeding for the Market," in *The Field* of August 15th, 1891, says as follows: "I believe that a good short-legged Indian Game cock crossed with Dorking hens will produce plumper, heavier and more meaty birds than the pure Dorkings of the modern exhibition strain that are bred for size, feather and comb, and not for plumpness of breast. I have been asked to award the prizes at several of the shows of dead poultry,

including those at Birmingham and the Dairy Show at the Agricultural Hall, and I have always found these crossbred birds superior to any others that have been exhibited. At the last Dairy Show the first prize in the crossbred classes went to birds that were so bred. As I awarded the prizes, I prefer taking the description of them that appeared in the *Bazaar* rather than giving my own account. Speaking of the crossbred birds, the writer says:—"The best pair were a cross between an Indian game cock and a Dorking hen. They were very white in the feet, very large, plump and full of quality. The skin was of a delicate texture and colour, and they were all round a grand pair of table fowls. . . . In the pullet class the birds were produced from an Indian game cock and a Dorking hen. They were superb in appearance, colour, and skin, quality of flesh, fineness of bone; and if we except a slight tinge in the colour of the feet, we should consider them very near perfection. They were also admirably trussed, and even more attractive on this account."

In 1891, at the Royal, Doncaster, first was awarded to a pair of cockerels, and second and third to a pair of pullets, which would have been first, but one had a slightly bent breast; and in cross-breds, first, second, and third, both for cockerels and pullets, went to Indian game Dorkings and Indian game Langshans.

In order to make the table poultry at this Show more valuable, Mr. Brown hit upon the happy idea of arranging that all selected birds should be weighed before and after being killed, thus showing the percentage of waste. Still, it would have been more valuable had the birds been properly drawn, and from the Society's journal we gather that the pair of Indian game cockerels lost only 14 oz., whereas the Dorkings lost 16 oz. and 23 oz., and Indian game pullets lost only 7 oz., against other breeds 10 oz. and 11 oz. Mr. Brown ends his remarks as follows:—

"It would be unadvisable to draw any general inference from the above statistics, because, as the fowls were not drawn, the loss was merely that of feathers and lower limbs. Still, it is interesting to note how small the loss was with Indian game and Indian game crosses."

At the Dairy, all the prizes for pure and cross-breds were awarded to Indian game, Indian game Dorkings, and Indian game Langshans. And Mr. Tegetmeier, writing of table classes at this show, in the *Field* of October 24th, 1891, says:—

“ As far as regards the exhibition, it was educational. The cross-bred Dorking and Indian game were unquestionably the best birds exhibited, both for plumpness and quality. Many of them were whiter in the skin than the Dorkings, and of much finer texture.

“ It is a remarkable fact that all these new-fangled feather breeds, which are so highly vaunted as proving first-class table fowl, failed to put in an appearance, which demonstrated the discretion of the owners rather than the value of the bird.

“ The names Plymouth Rock, Wyandotte, Langshan, Cochin, Brahma, and Orpington are absent from the pure-bred classes. We hear much of the merits of these birds as table fowls, but the owners appear to be too wise to put them in competition. In the cross-bred birds, the Indian game and Dorking were in both classes far superior.

“ By far the best pair of table chickens in the Show were a couple of pullets that took the second prize in the class. They were of very exceptional merit, young, exceedingly plump, of beautiful quality, and altogether a first-rate pair of table fowl. They may be regarded as a triumphant demonstration of the merits of the Indian game and Dorking cross.”

“ *The Stock-keeper*, in its report on the Table Poultry Class at the Crystal Palace Show, says:—

“ The Table Poultry Class at the Great National Show was remarkable for the number of birds that had Indian game blood for a component part. We noticed that many of the birds were a cross between this variety and Dorkings, and notably so the first and third prize pens, which had white legs, deep breasts, and large size; the latter pair being a particularly massive couple of pullets. We suppose that a cross of these two varieties produces the best table poultry in existence, and we wonder that they are not more bred at the home farms of our country gentlemen.”

The above shows decidedly that a cross with the Dorking is *par excellence* the table fowl, but crosses with the Plymouth Rock, Wyandotte and Langshan, being hardier breeds than the Dorking, would grow faster and make good marketable fowls, using a good vigorous cockerel with some twelve-months-old hens, as by so doing one is more likely to obtain pullets at the early part of the year than by using birds of the same season, and pullets come quicker to profit than cockerels.

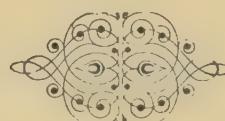
As regards laying, though the Indian game cannot be classed

among the laying breeds such as the Leghorn, Minorca, or Redcap, still it is a fair layer, pullets laying in the early winter months when eggs are scarce. If people simply want to fill the egg basket, they must not go in for Indian game, but for one of the non-sitting varieties, for it is impossible for any one to take up a breed having extraordinary table and laying properties at the same time. As it is with cattle so it is with poultry, we can breed for milk or breed for flesh, so we may breed for eggs or breed for table properties, choosing those strains in which the distinctive feature predominates, but we must not expect both from the one. In the one the food is assimilated in the production of milk or eggs, and in the other for the production of flesh.

The eggs are of a varied colour, from a palish buff to a dark brown, of medium size, roundish in form, and strong in shell; for flavour they are surpassed by none.

The incubating properties of the Indian game may be ranked as one of the best, covering in a remarkable manner the full complement of eggs with its short feathers, though it is advisable in the early part of the year to set only from nine to ten eggs in a nest. They are very quiet and stick to their nests, even regardless of food. They are good mothers, continuing with their chickens till out of danger, and are well able to defend them and scratch for them with their powerful claws.

The chickens, when hatched, vary in colour a good deal, some almost white, others resemble the Dorking and Redcap, only they show their prominent shape from the shell. They all moult out true in the first feather, the difference in the sex being easily seen. They grow apace in genial weather, and being not blessed (?) with a superabundance of feather, are not troubled with vermin.



CHAPTER IV.

DESCRIPTION.

 In general appearance the Indian game somewhat resemble the Malay, but are shorter in leg, rounder in form, and altogether more elegant, active and vigorous, broad, flesh firm in handling, and very short and hard in feather, as if they were clothed in a coat of mail of burnished steel. The head is not as thick as the Malay, nor have they such a scowling look, eyebrows not being so heavy or beetle browed; pea combs, but cocks are mostly dubbed; skulls broad; heads rather long, but not keen or snakey; faces rich red, smooth, and fine in texture—a striking contrast to their yellow legs and bright plumage when in high condition; beaks strong and well curved; necks medium length, slightly arched.

In cocks, the short hackles of green glossy black with crimson shafts; breasts deep, well rounded in form, broad at shoulders, with shoulder butts very prominent; backs flattish—on no account hollow—and body in appearance very thick and compact; wings short, close to the body, and carried high in front; shanks and legs strong and well scaled, of a good bright orange colour. Colour of breast, under-thighs, green glossy black, which should be of a solid colour; back, saddle and saddle hackle a mixture of green glossy black, and brown crimson; wing-bow glossy black intermixed with crimson red; tail slightly drooping, short narrow secondary sickles, and tail coverts of a green glossy black hard and close. Twisted or reddish neck hackles; reddish backs and saddle hackles, heavy tails with broad covert feathers, splashed breasts or white under feathers; long shank and neck are most objectionable points. In shape the hen is like the cock, but the beautiful marking of plumage is the special characteristic of the breed, resembling more than anything the pheasant. Ground colour, chestnut brown, double laced with metallic green glossy black as if enamelled on

feather. Many specimens of the present day are too light and mealy in colour, and have not that defined double lacing. Indian game hens without doubt should be double laced, and every bird has it more or less, and we do not want a better authority than the well known artist Mr. Ludlow, who examines the feathers microscopically for his drawings, and he distinctly says that those under feathers which appear to the naked eye clear, show under the microscope shadings of double lacing. As this is such a feature of the breed, and unlike any other breed, why should we sacrifice it, as it certainly can be retained, together with the other essential good points.

The following are the English and the American Standards of Perfection.

ENGLISH INDIAN GAME STANDARD.

Fixed and adopted by the English Indian Game Club.

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS.

Head and Neck.—General appearance of head rather long and thickish, not so keen as in English game nor as thick as in Malays, yet somewhat beetle-browed, but not nearly as much as in the Malay. Skull broadish. Neck medium length and slightly arched.

Beak.—Horn colour or yellow striped with horn, strong, well curved, stout where set on head, giving the bird a powerful appearance.

Whole Face.—Smooth and fine in texture, including deaf ears, throat not as bare as in English game, being dotted over with small feathers.

Comb (in undubbed birds).—Irregular pea comb, the more regular however, the better; small, closely set on to head, deaf ears small and wattles very scanty.

Eyebrows.—Very slightly beetle-browed, but not giving such a cruel expression as in the Malay; eye full and bold, of yellow colour.

Neck.—Medium length and slightly arched.

Hackle.—Short, just covering base of neck, twisted hackle objectionable.

BODY.

General Shape.—Very thick and compact; very broad at shoulders, the shoulder butts showing prominently, but the bird

must not be hollow backed ; body tapering towards tail. Elegance is required with substance.

Back.—Flattish, but the bird must not be flat-sided, broadest at shoulders.

Breast.—Wide, fair depth and prominent, but well-rounded.

Wings.—Short and closely carried to body, well rounded at point, and closely tucked at ends, carried rather high in front.

LEGS, FEET, AND THIGHS.

Legs.—Very strong and thick ; thighs round and stout but not as long as in the Malay ; feet strong.

Shank.—Medium length and well scaled. The length of shank must be sufficient to give the bird a gamey appearance, but in no case should it be as long as in the Malay, or in any way stilty.

Toes and Nails.—Toes long, strong, straight, and well apart, the back toe low and nearly flat on the ground ; nails well shaped.

Cock's Tail.—Medium length with a few short *narrow* secondary sickles and tail coverts. Carriage of tail drooping ; tail to be close, hard, and glossy.

Hen's Tail.—Rather short, carried low, but somewhat higher than cocks ; well venetianed but close.

Size and Weight.—Large ; weight in cock, 8 to 10 lbs. or more for adults ; weight in hen, $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 7 lbs. or more.

General Appearance of both Sexes.—Powerful and broad ; very active, sprightly, and vigorous. Flesh to be firm in handling. Plumage short, and cannot be too hard and close.

Carriage.—Upright, commanding, and courageous ; the back sloping downwards towards the tail.

COLOUR.

Of Cock.—Breast, underbody, and thighs a green, glossy black ; neck hackle green, glossy black, with brown crimson shafts to feathers ; back, saddle, and saddle-hackle a mixture of rich green, glossy black and brown crimson, the former predominating greatly ; wing bow chestnut with metallic green, glossy black wing bar. Tail green glossy black.

Of Hen.—Round colour chestnut brown, with beautiful lacing of medium size ; lacing of metallic green, glossy black. This should look as if it were embossed or raised.

Shank.—In both sexes yellow or orange, the deeper the colour the better. Face, deaf ears, wattles and comb a rich red.

AMERICAN INDIAN GAME STANDARD,
Adopted by the American Indian Game Club at Philadelphia, Pa.,
January 11th, 1892.

DISQUALIFICATIONS.

Decidedly wry tails, crooked backs, artificial colouring or trimming of foul feathers; single, rose or Malay combs; shanks solid, white, blue or black; feathers on shanks or feet.

STANDARD WEIGHTS.

Cock, 9 lbs.; cockerel, $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.; hen, $6\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.; pullet, 5 lbs.

SCALE OF POINTS.

8 Carriage		Neck	2	Body	2					
		Tail	2	Wings	2					
3	Beak	...	...	1	2	10	Breast	...	6	4
2	Head	...	...	1	1	8	Body and stern	...	5	3
3	Eyes	...	...	0	3	8	Wings...	...	4	4
3	Comb	...	...	3	0	8	Tail	...	4	4
2	Wattles	...	...	2	0	4	Hardness of feather			
3	Lobes	...	...	1	2	6	Condition			
7	Neck	...	...	4	3	10	Weight			
7	Back	...	...	4	3	8	Legs and feet	...	4	4

THE MALE SHAPE.

Beak.—Strong, well curved, stout where set on head, giving the bird a powerful appearance.

Head.—Of medium length and width, the crown slightly projecting over the eyes.

Eyes.—Full, of good size and with a bold and fearless expression.

Face.—Smooth and fine in texture.

Comb.—Pea, small, firm and even upon the head.

Wattles.—Very scanty, smooth in texture and even.

Ear-lobes.—Small, regular in shape, of fine texture, and fitting smooth and close to the head.

Neck.—Medium in length, slightly arched.

Throat.—Dotted with small feathers.

Hackle.—Moderately short, just nicely covering base of neck.

Back.—Slightly convex and sloping slightly from each side of back bone, broad at the shoulders, and well filled in at base of neck, narrowing slightly to the tail, but carrying its width well back to juncture of the thighs.

Breast.—Wide, deep, well rounded at the sides, projecting forward slightly beyond the wing fronts when the bird is standing erect.

Body and Stern.—Body well rounded at sides, keel bone straight, stern well tucked up underneath.

Wings.—Medium length, stout and closely folded, the fronts standing out prominently from the body at the shoulders, and points well rounded when folded, and should be closely tucked at ends and held about on a line with tail coverts.

Tail.—Medium length, with a few short narrow secondary sickles and tail coverts. Carriage of tail drooping. Tail to be close, hard, and glossy.

Thighs and Shanks.—Thighs round, stout and moderately long; shanks moderately long, but not stilty, standing well apart, stout in bone and smoothly scaled.

Feet.—Large, clean and flat, the toes long, clean, straight and well spread, the hind toe set low and extending backward; nails strong and well-shaped.

Plumage.—Short, hard, and very glossy.

Body in Hand.—Firm, compact and muscular.

Carriage and Style.—Erect, upright and commanding, giving an appearance of vigour and activity.

Size.—Large, the larger the better, other qualities being equal.

THE FEMALE SHAPE.

Beak.—Strong, well curved, stout where set on head, giving the bird a powerful appearance.

Head.—Of medium length and width, the crown slightly projecting over the eyes.

Eyes.—Full, of good size, and with a bold and fearless expression.

Face.—Smooth and fine in texture.

Comb.—Pea, small, firm and even upon the head.

Wattles.—Very scanty, but smooth in texture and even.

Ear-lobes.—Small, regular in shape, of fine texture, fitting smooth and close to the head.

Neck.—Medium in length and slightly arched; hackle, moderately short.

Back.—Slightly convex, and sloping slightly from each side of back bone, broad at the shoulders and well filled in at base of neck, narrowing slightly at the tail, but carrying its width well back to juncture of the thighs.

Breast.—Wide and deep, well rounded at the sides and pro-

jecting forward slightly beyond the wing fronts when the bird is standing erect.

Body and Stern.—Body well-rounded at the sides, keel bone straight, stern well tucked up underneath.

Wings.—Short and closely folded, the fronts standing out prominently from the body at the shoulders, and the points well rounded.

Tail.—Rather short, compact, and folded close when the bird is standing at ease; carried at a slightly greater elevation than that of the male, due to the less erect carriage of the bird.

Thighs and Shanks.—Thighs round, stout, and moderately long; shanks, moderately long, but not stilted, standing well apart, stout in bone and smoothly scaled.

Feet.—Large, clean and flat; the toes long, clean, straight and well spread, the hind toe set low and extending backward; the nails strong and well-shaped.

Plumage.—Short, hard, and very glossy.

Body in Hand.—Firm, compact and muscular.

Carriage and Style.—Erect, upright and commanding, similar to that of the male, but not quite so erect.

Size.—Large, the larger the better, other qualities being equal.

THE MALE COLOUR.

Beak.—Horn colour or yellow striped with horn.

Head—Black.

Eyes.—Daw.

Comb, Wattles and Ear-lobes.—Bright red.

Neck.—Hackle, green glossy black, with brown crimson shaft to each feather.

Back.—Green glossy black and dark crimson red intermixed, the black greatly predominating. Saddle, like the back, but with a somewhat larger proportion of dark crimson red.

Breast.—Rich glossy black, free from any other colour.

Body and Stern.—Black.

Wings.—Wing fronts black, wing bow green glossy black and dark crimson red intermixed, the black greatly predominating. Wing coverts forming the wing bar, metallic black. Primaries, black, except a narrow edging of bay or cinnamon brown on the outside of lower web. Secondaries, upper web black, lower web about one-third black next to shaft of feather, the remainder being bay or cinnamon brown.

Tail.—Black, sickle feathers and tail coverts a lustrous black.

Thighs.—Black.

Shanks and Feet.—Rich yellow or orange.

THE FEMALE COLOUR.

Beak.—Horn colour, or yellow striped with horn. Clear yellow preferred.

Head.—Black, or black laced with chestnut red.

Eyes.—Daw.

Comb.—Wattles and ear-lobes, bright red.

Neck.—Hackle glossy black with a bay shaft to each feather.

Back.—Ground colour, bay, each feather laced with two or more narrow lacings of lustrous black, the lacings following the contour of the web of the feather.

Breast.—Ground colour bay, each feather with two or more narrow lacings of lustrous black, the lacings following the contour of the web of the feather.

Body and Stern.—Body, ground colour bay, each feather laced with two or more narrow lacings of lustrous black, the lacings following the contour of the web of the feather. Stern, black, or black tinged with bay.

Wings.—Bow and coverts bay, each feather laced with one or more narrow lacings of lustrous black, the lacings following the contour of the web of the feathers. Primaries black, except a narrow edge of irregularly pencilled bay upon the outer part of the lower web. Secondaries, upper web black, lower web black next to shaft of feather, with a broad margin of irregularly pencilled bay.

Tail.—Main feathers black, except the two upper or deck feathers, which should be irregularly pencilled. The main feathers may also be irregularly pencilled. Coverts, bay, laced with two or more narrow lacings of lustrous black, the lacings following the contour of the web of the feathers.

Thighs.—Black, more or less laced, but solid black not to be considered a serious defect.

Shanks and Feet.—Rich yellow or orange.

In comparing the two standards one is bound to congratulate the Americans on theirs, as it is by far the best, especially as regards the colour of both sexes. The American standard of the wing of the cock bird is good, very minute, and more correct than ours, particularly the wing-bow, because no one ever saw a good Indian

game cock with a chestnut wing-bow—"glossy black with dark crimson intermixed" is preferable; the same may be said of the colour of the hen, which is excellent throughout, for certainly ours is rather vague to anyone just taking up the breed. The scale of points adopted by them is as it should be, as shape in such a breed, having commercial properties, should in every case have two points more than colour.

We must look to the judges when judging this breed to follow more the standard, and not give awards to birds stilty, deficient in thigh, or knock-kneed, as is often done; such birds are practically useless, and only deteriorate the race if used for breeding, and are only fit for an early roast.



CHAPTER V.

POPULARITY.

 T was at a meeting held at Devonport in 1886 that an Indian Game Club was first formed, when the above-mentioned English standard was adopted for the breed, Mr. Julius Mosenthal being secretary; but on his being called to the Continent, Rev. H. J. Crockford, of Broad Wood Kelly, Winkleigh, took up the secretaryship, but on account of disagreements respecting some of the members, the Club fell to the ground.

In 1891 it was resuscitated at a meeting held at Bridgwater, with Mr. John Frayn as President, and George T. Whitfield as secretary, and a good representative committee, consisting of Rev. H. J. Crockford, Messrs. Brent, Williams, Bevington, Frayn, Brook, Crew, Clark, Cross, Cocker, Davenport, Gott, Goodall, Huxtable, Keough and Marshall, the old standard being adopted. Thirty members were soon elected, and with recent elections the club now numbers fifty, and bids fair to become one of the popular clubs in England.

In 1889 an Indian Game Club was started in America, with Mr. H. S. Babcock as president and Mr. O. K. Sharp as secretary, and a committee consisting of Messrs. Gaylor, Bowman, Irving, Crocker, Sharp, Babcock, Bicknell, and Drevenstedt, and soon enrolled fifty members. By this time we understand that there are a hundred members, so that it is not only in England that this breed has made such rapid strides, but also in our colonies, and especially in America, where it has been quite a boom the last two years. Without wishing to claim what rightly belongs to others, I think I may fairly say that it was the birds which I exhibited at the Buffalo International Show, New York, in January, 1889, which first started the rage for the breed over there. I do not say that Indian game were not there before, because they were, as some competed against mine then, but they were such poor specimens that they did not increase in favour. And here let me remark that it

is the greatest folly for us English breeders to send poor specimens abroad. Fanciers in America and elsewhere are as keen fanciers as ourselves, they pay a good price, and also have the risk of transit, and ought not to be disappointed with the specimens they purchase. I have been told by breeders over there that an incredible amount of rubbish which is only fit for killing has been sent over. When the Minorca craze was on, anything in the shape of a black fowl was sent for a Minorca. When the Redcap craze was on, birds with feathered legs were sent, and now I know for a fact that Indian game which an American fancier rejected when over here, were sent to comply with an order of another fancier over there.

If we wish to continue our connection with foreign countries we must certainly let them know that they can rely on the quality of birds sent to them. The birds sent to the Buffalo Show included a cock, with which I took second, Palace, 1888 ; a hen, I took first, Birmingham, 1887 ; another hen, H.C., Palace, and a good pullet ; and though through stress of weather they were three weeks overdue, going straight from the express car to the show pen, they were awarded first on cock, first and second on hen, first on pullet, first on Breeding Pen, and were eventually bought at a good figure. Since which time hundreds have been sent over, one American fancier coming over here to see them, and he took back and sent over, while here, more than five hundred birds, which I selected from the best breeders in England ; and including exportations by other breeders, it is within the mark to say that over one thousand birds of this breed were imported into America in 1890, more money being put in them by breeders there than all other fowls together.

The reason that it is so popular in America is that they want an all-purpose fowl. Both judges and breeders there freely admit that it is the strongest rival the Plymouth Rock and Wyandotte ever had, and that it certainly presents points of superiority over them in many respects, as they say no other variety can be offered to so many classes of people interested in poultry as the Indian game. As the quickest-growing chick it captivates the broiler man, who wants a chicken fit for the spit in eight to nine weeks as broilers, and in America broiler men are an institution analagous to the Duckers in the Vale of Aylesbury here.

As the best meated fowl and good layers, they suit the farmer and the poultry man ; for delicate flavour the epicure ; and for beauty in pencilling of plumage, commanding and dignified appearance, the fancier.

Several breeders over there write that they have found them good layers, equalling other birds, the climate suiting them ; and putting aside their beauty and fancy points, considered only economically, they are certainly unsurpassed and unequalled.

The following are extracts from the writings of several American fanciers.

Mr. O. K. Sharp, of the firm of C. A. Sharp and Co., Lockport, N.Y., writes : " No woodcut or steel engraving could possibly represent the beauty and intricate marking of such beautiful birds. Pen pictures and wood paintings alike fail to convey to the reader an adequate idea of the lustrous plumage of a bird that leads all others in finely-marked feathers and beautiful combinations of colour. . . . The general appearance of both male and female is majestic ; both stand erect and stand high, evidently conscious of their superior breeding ; are very active, strong, and wonderfully decided in every movement.

" They have, beside their fine plumage, other qualities which will commend them to all classes of poultrymen. As chicks they are very hardy and easily reared, grow remarkably fast ; cockerels at seven weeks weigh 2 lbs., at eleven weeks $3\frac{3}{4}$ lbs., at fourteen weeks 5 to $5\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. ; at twelve weeks they will weigh more than a white Wyandotte will at eighteen weeks, and the latter has been considered the best broiler chick up to the present time. At twelve weeks they begin to throw their chicken feathers, and the cockerels are very handsome, even more so than when they have taken on their final plumage.

" The only claim that has so far been advanced in their favour is their superiority as a meat bird, and upon this claim there can be no doubt of their superiority, being rapid growers and possessing very plump, round bodies, and yellow legs ; there is no question but what they must bring the very highest market price paid for poultry. While the Plymouth Rocks and Wyandottes are growing a long and superfluous feather, the Indian game is growing a short hard feather, growing it quicker, and the extra feather food required in the growth of the long feather in them goes toward making meat.

" No claim has ever been made as to their laying qualities, but we find them, so far, to be good layers.

" From January 25th up to August 18th, two hens and one pullet have laid 300 eggs. We would not be afraid to stake them against the Plymouth Rocks of same age.

"They make excellent mothers, as do all game hens. When broody they are very easily handled; have never found them to be ugly or vicious in their deportment, on the contrary, we find them the easiest fowl to handle of any of the many varieties which we have bred.

"A great point in the Indian game's favour is the fact that custom requires a game to be dubbed. If this were practised on other varieties which sport such large combs, it would be to their advantage if kept only for laying. This insures you against frosted combs and wattles, which is fatal to egg production for a long time after being frosted.

"If there were never a word written or a cut printed about the Indian game, we believe that in time they would become the leading general purpose fowl of America. A fowl having so many excellent qualities cannot long stay in the dark.

"To sum up their good qualities, we would credit them with having the finest plumage of any bird; the most majestic appearance; with being the best broiler and meat bird; with being a good layer; with being the best general purpose fowl in the world. We have in them the farmer's and gentleman's fowl combined. No matter how much they are attacked by breeders of other breeds, they will surely take the lead, and prove themselves to be what we claim them to be — 'the king of all birds.' "

Mr. J. H. Drevestadt, the well-known editor of the *Fanciers' Journal*, Philadelphia, writes as follows:—

"When I first saw a pen of Indian games exhibited in an American showroom, I little dreamed that it was the means of starting a boom such as we have not experienced in many years. The pen of birds referred to was sent over by Mr. Whitfield, and afterwards purchased by Messrs. C. A. Sharp & Co., of Lockport, New York. Shortly after this show I received three feathers from O. K. Sharp, and the beautiful pencilling impressed me so much that I had the feathers photographed, and a plate made, which appeared in the *Poultry Bulletin*, in connection with an article written at my request by O. K. Sharp. The latter proclaimed the Indian game as the 'Bird of Destiny,' and he was not far from being right.

"The utilitarian qualities were strongly advanced in print, especially the market or edible qualities of the dead fowl. The yellow legs and heavy bodies commended the Indian game to the American market.

"Whether the meat is superior to that of other table breeds I am not prepared to say, for the price of Indian game is such that it would be a positive luxury to indulge in a ten- or twenty-dollar dinner for the sake of determining the superior quality. However, I have not the slightest doubt that the Indian game will prove a superior fowl for the table.

"My own experience with Indian game has been favourable, and my opportunities for observing their behaviour in the hands of others leads me to think that, as a rule, they have 'caught on,' to use a popular expression.

"The Hill Poultry Yards of Jannesburgh, New Jersey, contained many choice specimens, and the proprietor, Mr. T. W. Hill, who was, and is still, a firm believer in the Wyandotte, has decided to permanently retain the Indian game in his collection.

"Mr. Hill breeds for market and fancy, and his two years' experience with Indian game leads him to select them as profitable fowls.

"In order to test their laying powers he made an experiment last winter, which resulted as follows:—

"The number of eggs laid by this pen of four pullets is as follows:—

"This is an average of 3.40 eggs per day, each pullet's average being .85 eggs per day. They were fed as follows:—Mash made of bran (40 parts), ground oats and corn (50 parts), animal meal (10 parts), constituted the morning food, the fowls receiving only what they would eat up clean. Raw bone and meat was fed on alternate days. Cracked corn, wheat, and oats at night. The fowls had a run on a field of green rye.

"These are excellent results, and I will state that the pullets were fresh from a farm range, and had never been forced for the show-room. Other breeders, again, complain that Indian game are poor layers, but I can trace this to the condition of their birds, the latter being hunted around in the shows before they are placed in the breeding pens. Such a course is suicidal to all breeds. My own experience confirms this. I never breed many birds in a pen, as my object is feathers only; hence, when I selected three birds that were imported, and also shown at various shows, I could not reasonably expect a large egg-product. I was not disappointed, for one of the hens was reluctant to lay a hard-shelled egg for a long time after I purchased her, but careful feeding eventually overcame this difficulty, and she laid extremely good eggs the rest of the season.

"The chickens I found very hardy in the climate of New Jersey, where I reside. The soil is gravelly and dry, and the temperature, while exceedingly warm in summer, did not affect the birds injuriously, neither have I seen any evidences of roup in this section, although others claim that the Indian game is liable to it. This may be in a measure true, but the whole trouble lies in improper care of the birds. Imported birds must be acclimatized, and this in itself is an important drawback, as it is easier to condemn a breed than to blame the change of climate and surroundings.

"The great value of the Indian game lies in the wonderful prepotency of its blood; crossed on most any breed the progeny is excellent.

"The best cross I ever made was an Indian Game on Golden Wyandotte hens. The progeny were the most thrifty and solid chicks I ever saw. I have to day a cockerel that looks like a gigantic Malay, but with fuller and deeper breast. This bird has attracted universal attention, and others who have made the cross are loud in their praises of its value.

"The plumage of the Indian game female will be standard when the feathers are double-laced. The single lacing does not disqualify, but the other is preferred, and will win, other points being equal.

"As to shape, a little difference of opinion exists, some preferring the high stationed bird, while others prefer the more blocky type. Personally I am inclined to favour the latter, but my ideal Indian game have always been the birds illustrated by Mr. Ludlow, viz., 'Agitator and Lady Whitfield.'

"The drawing was perhaps a happy one, and being favourably impressed with it, the type has stuck to me ever since."

Mr. H. P. Clarke, of Indianapolis, Indiana, writes thus:—

"The true Cornish Indian game is a remarkably handsome bird in every way, and is certainly the best general purpose fowl ever brought to this country. I have bred them longer than any other man in America, and have thoroughly tested their economic qualities. For table use they are without an equal."

"The hens are splendid layers at all seasons of the year, steady sitters and good mothers for their chicks. The little fellows grow like weeds, and are just about as hardy, where given the free range of a farm. They need very little attention, for they can pretty well get their own living and take care of themselves."

"Different from most of the game varieties these fowls can be raised together in any numbers without trouble from the male birds fighting; in fact, they seem as peaceful and good-natured as Plymouth Rocks, as long as no strange roosters are in sight."

"In weight cocks run from seven to twelve pounds, according to the strain, and taste of the breeder. It is an easy matter to breed the birds very large, and those who want them only for table purposes are inclined to prefer fowls of this kind, but game fanciers and others who breed these birds merely as ornamental game fowls think the most desirable weights seven to eight pounds for cocks, and five and one-half to seven pounds for hens."

Mr. W. Atlee Burpee, of Fordhook, Philadelphia, writes as follows:—

"No breed ever introduced has created such a *furore* among fanciers as the Indian game, and they are bound to be of great value to the *farm-poultry* interests of the country."

"The true Cornish Indian game is a most attractive and stylish bird. Their beauty can hardly be described, the closeness and hardness of the plumage giving them a lustre seldom equalled, while their every movement is indicative of high breeding. The graceful outline and proud carriage of the cock (and hen as well) always excite admiration."

"While so pre-eminently *a fowl for fancy*, they cannot fail equally to *delight the poultry farmer*. As a superb table fowl they are unexcelled. They have exceptionally broad, deep breasts, and are heavily meated throughout. They are *much weightier* than their apparent size would indicate, cocks weighing nine and a-half to ten

and a-half pounds each when in ordinary breeding condition, and hens six to seven and a-half pounds each. Their flesh is of the finest quality, while they mature quickly, and consequently will be invaluable for crossing. . . .

“They are also really *first-class layers*, giving more eggs proportionately the past year at Fordhook Farm than any other breed that does its own incubating. The hens make excellent mothers, if allowed to sit, while they can readily be broken up in two or three days, when inclined to sit, and it is a remarkable fact that they will then begin to lay again in about a week. The young chicks hatch out very uniform in size and markings; they are very sprightly and *extremely hardy*, growing quickly and maturing early. They are very free from disease, have strong constitutions, and are easily raised. They are excellent foragers if allowed their liberty, and yet thrive splendidly in confinement. Altogether, aside from their beauty and “*fancy points*,” considered *economically* they are certainly *unsurpassed*, and we are inclined to think *unequalled*. When placed on market their fine appearance as dressed poultry will secure ready sales, while the *superb quality* and *rich flavour* of the meat should command an extra price.”

Mr. H. S. Babcock, of Providence, writes thus:—

“While to the fancier the great beauty of the Indian game is an entirely sufficient reason for its existence, to the practical poultry man there must be some further reason given. His first thought is of utility. He does not and he cannot afford to keep fowls simply to look at. They must be good for something—must be able to add to his income—or he will have none of them.

“The Indian game, fortunately, is able to say something for itself upon this point. It is a splendid table fowl, the chief among chief breeds for this purpose. It has abundance of meat; the meat is fine grained and beautiful in colour. It is disposed most abundantly upon the choicest places; it is of the finest flavour. The skin and the shanks are yellow, and yellow is the favourite colour in American markets. The breast is very full and round, and the breast, more than any other part of the dressed fowl, determines its attractiveness.

“The fowl grows to great weight, grows rapidly, and is plump in build in all times, despite its length of leg. Few indeed are the fowls, if there are any that can dress so handsomely as an Indian game, even when very young. It is therefore ready for killing at almost all stages of growth. It has received the highest endorsement.

abroad, and has therefore won many a prize in dressed poultry exhibits.

“ It has the confidence and endorsement of those who are experimentally familiar with the breed in this country. I have myself killed pure-bred Indian game and Indian game crossed on other breeds for my own table, and know that the reputation of the fowl is warranted by the facts.

“ For so good a table breed it is a good layer. We do not expect to find the most prolific laying and the best table qualities combined in one fowl. The prolificacy of the Leghorn and the table qualities of the Indian game have not been, and never will be, united. But despite the antagonism which exists between great laying and great table qualities, the Indian game has proved to be a very fair layer. . . . The eggs are of good size, usually of a pale buff colour, though sometimes quite dark, and are especially excellent for boiling, or for fine cooking.

“ Strains differ in the size of the egg produced. The hens I first imported laid very large eggs, while those of later importations have laid eggs somewhat smaller, yet of good size.

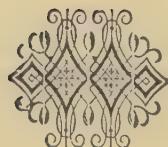
“ The fowl is a good setter, especially the lighter hens. I do not like very heavy hens for setters, for they are apt to crush some of the eggs, especially if one happens to get some with thin shells under them. But the hens of this breed, which weigh $5\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. to 6 lbs., make thoroughly reliable incubators, faithful brooders, and competent defenders of their young. Some of the hens break up easily, when it is not desired to have them sit, while others are more persistent, and take more time and patience to accomplish this result. But all will yield in reasonable time to the demands of the owner.

“ The Indian game is a hardy fowl. The eggs hatch well and the chicks thrive.

“ The word ‘game,’ in its name, has led some to suppose that it was a very pugnacious fowl, and that its keeping entailed endless trouble. Visions of scalped chickens and dead ones arose at the mention of the dread combination, Indian game. But the facts are, that, while it is not wanting in courage; that, while the fowls are not easily cowed, it has been no more difficult to manage than the Plymouth Rock, and less difficult than the Leghorns I once used to keep. One can keep in one yard a hundred stags which have been reared together, and no trouble will ensue; but it is not advisable to

introduce a strange cock into the yard with a lot of Indian game, or for that matter, with a lot of meek-eyed Asiatics. There is danger of a general *melee* under such circumstances. No one who has the courage to keep Cochins need be deterred from keeping Indian Game because of their pugnacity. The Indian game is a courageous but naturally quiet, peaceable fowl—agreeable to manage if it is managed properly.

“Being a heavy fowl, and having a short wing, it is not difficult to confine this breed. A fence which will confine a Plymouth Rock is usually quite sufficient to keep an Indian game within bounds. Unlike most of the game family, the Indian is not a high flyer.”



CHAPTER VI.

MANAGEMENT.

N mating pens for breeding for exhibition purposes, one would do better to make up two pens—one for breeding cockerels, the other, pullets, though no doubt good birds of both sexes can be bred from one pen. In both cases mate a good cockerel or a one year old bird preferred, of exhibition points, to well shaped hens, with good shoulders and breast, strong in limb, heavily marked, and ground colour well defined, for breeding cockerels: but to hens lighter in shade of lacing and feather, for breeding pullets; in both sexes, birds of one year old will throw stronger chickens.

Another mating has been tried, with good results, producing some of our best pullets, by using a cock with reddish hackle and saddle hackle, to some heavily marked hens, but the percentage of worthless birds as result of this mating is very great, and would be still greater if the hens used were not from some well bred strain.

“ In mating for crossbreds I find from experience better results are obtained by using the Indian game for the male bird than for the female, and so advise using an Indian game cock to some one-year old hens or pullets of the Dorking breed, for the finest table poultry, but where quickness of growth and size are required, with fine quality, the Brahma, or Langshan; and here let me remark that if the finest table poultry is required, it is essential that the sexes be divided before the cockerels begin to crow. They will grow quicker, especially the cockerels, and the flesh will be of far more delicate flavour.

In mating up some ten or twelve hens together, it is better to run two male birds with them, especially in the early winter months; better results in fertility of eggs may be relied upon; as possibly one cock may be at times under the weather, and consequently not able to pay the necessary attention to the hens, thus causing serious disappointment in the hatching, at a time when the loss cannot be rectified, the season having slipped by.

Indian game chickens do equally as well hatched in an incubator, and reared artificially, as under hens. The best incubator I know—and I have tried several—is one called "The Monarch," an American machine, and I am using one having the capacity for 180 eggs, and another for 300 eggs, but the question of incubation is far too lengthy a subject to enter upon here, but both in rearing chickens—especially Indian game—artificially and under hens there is one great point which must not be overlooked—that is, liberty. Let them get out for exercise, no matter how cold it is. It is often a complaint that chickens die from rheumatism. It is not rheumatism brought on by exposure. They are overfed, very probably with too stimulating food and pampered up—that the active members themselves become cramped through bile and want of exercise to work it off.

In rearing chickens with hens be sure and put the coops far enough from each other. The hens are very jealous of their broods, and it is a dangerous pastime for the little ones to be exchanging visits.

In rearing Indian game chickens it is advisable to add some bone meal to their soft food, or preferably to place some in boxes within reach, as bone-forming material, as strong limbs are required to carry such a weight of flesh; also, a little sulphur is a capital thing when not too cold, to help them feather quickly. This and bone should be used especially when their tails are starting, which is always a trying time. A little meat given now and then will always repay itself. They must be kept growing; if they once stop they never pick it up again. The sooner the chicks are got on partial grain food the better. They appear to do better on hard food than other varieties. When they can eat it, Indian corn is a capital thing to grow them on, using it for their last meal, but at the same time it must be used very sparingly (if at all) to the breeding pens. They are particularly fond of it, and it only encourages fat and complications.

When six months old, or even before, it is better to separate the pullets from the cockerels; the latter will live more amicably together. Weed out any that are weak on leg, or otherwise faulty, as they will come in for a roast. Do not hesitate to use the knife freely; those left will do all the better for their removal.

When broody the Indian game is very tenacious of its nest. If it is necessary to get them off the brood remove them to another pen

with a strange cockerel, but do not let any other hens be in the same pen, as, being broody, they are rather cramped, and not able to cope with them, but it is better to follow nature's laws, and the hen will moult sooner and do better for having had the rest of sitting; so put some duck eggs under, and when hatched the ducklings can be removed, as they do as well, if not better, reared by hand. The hen is then released, and does not waste as much time as if she reared them.

There is not much trouble in preparing Indian game for the show-pen. They only require their legs and faces well scrubbed with soap and water, then place them on the table and well rub them down with a silk handkerchief, to put the bloom on. If the birds are well bred, no breed stands showing to such an extent, but they must be done well. Too much confinement causes pale legs, and they should be of a good orange. To get the desired hardness of feather, canary seed—now and then hemp and peas—are a capital addition, and the soft food, mixed up with stewed linseed, brings out the sheen.

Do not send young birds to the show straight from the pen, but put them in pens of your own. Give them a little meat, to entice them to the front, and handle them, to get them tame. A wild bird, no matter how good, is useless in the show-pen. Always put your bird in the pink of condition in the show-pen; they will be far more likely to catch the judge's eye than another bird, though having better points being out of condition.



CHAPTER VII.

CAUTION.

N conclusion, I would caution would-be purchasers from purchasing birds or eggs from any but the best breeders. There are several of them in England, and now, even in America who have good stock. This affects this breed more than any other, for when one knows from experience how great is the prepotency of this breed, and what birds akin to Indian game may be produced by turning down a strong Indian game cock among some barn-door fowls, such crossbreeds, though most useful birds in their way, may easily be traded on the unwary as pure-bred Indian game. One now sees a so-called White Indian game exhibited in our shows, but it will never find favour with our judges, and this bird is being passed off in America as a distinct variety of Indian game. Why ! What is it ? It is a regular dunhill ; can be produced anywhere, at no trouble or expense. I myself gave two Indian game cockerels to a gentleman who kept some white barn-door fowls, and the result was fully 30 per cent. of the so-called White Indian game. The same cross can easily be attained by any one having White Malays of Aseel. Where will it end ? If one breeder will start White Indian game, another may start Black Indian game, another Buff Indian game, and so on through all the colours. If the value of the breed could be enhanced by so doing, by all means let it be done, but the characteristic feature—the great beauty—of the Indian game female is the superb lacing, and there is little doubt that English breeders are not going to sacrifice this for self colours, and surely they are not worth the freight to foreign countries. Instead of perpetuating mongrels, let us all strive to breed ideal specimens of the true Indian game.

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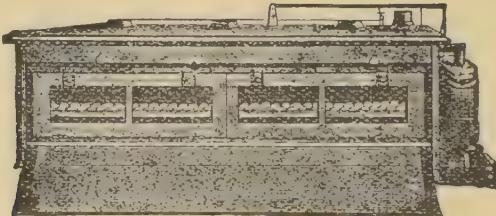
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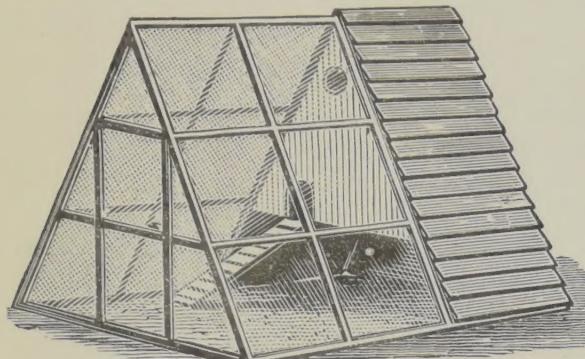
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Painted outside and lime-washed inside.

Size 10ft. by 6ft., height 6ft.

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House only, £2 17s. 6d.

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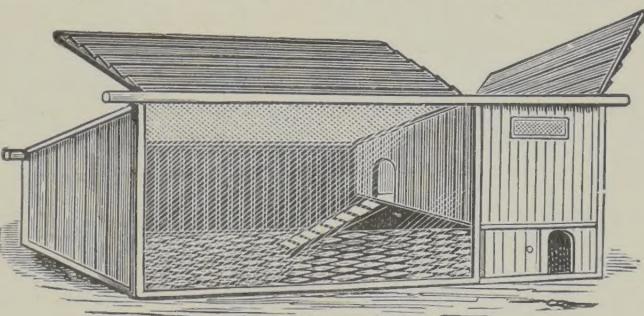
A very convenient House for Bantams and Chickens, and so constructed as to be quite portable when in use. All parts carefully fitted before despatch. Perches, nests, &c., complete.

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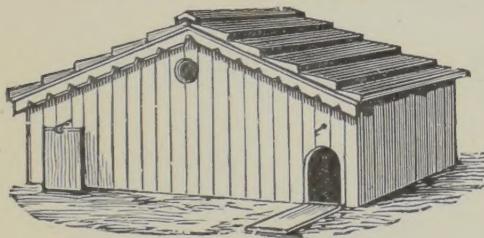
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No. 74. Portable Duck House.



This is a very useful House for Ducks and other Waterfowl, and should be placed near a pond or stream. Strongly made and arranged with partition in the interior, forming two compartments, each compartment having a separate entrance as illustrated, and with door hinged at bottom. A large door at back with lock, &c.

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Cash Price, Carriage Paid, £2 7s. 6d.

No. 76. Folding Coop for Poultry or Game.

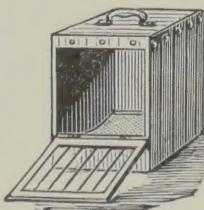


This form of Coop affords shelter without risk of the chickens being trodden upon, as the hen can only stand in the centre. Will fold flat for storage.

2ft. 7in. long by 2ft. 7in. wide. 1ft. 10in. high.

One Coop, 7/-, 6 Coops, 40/-, 12 Coops, £4.

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